

AD-A038 808

ARMY WAR COLL STRATEGIC STUDIES INST CARLISLE BARRACKS PA
IN SEARCH OF THE NATIONAL PURPOSE.(U)
MAR 77 A K BLOOD

F/6 5/4

UNCLASSIFIED

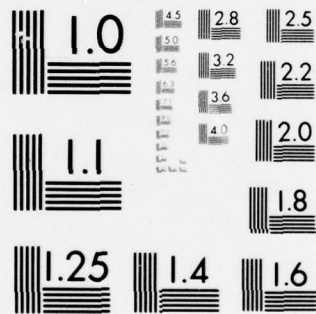
NL

| OF |
AD
A038808



END

DATE
FILMED
5-77



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

AD A038808

(12)
85

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

25 MARCH 1977

12 24p.

ACN 77012

6

IN SEARCH OF THE
NATIONAL PURPOSE.

10 Archer K. Blood



9

MILITARY ISSUES RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT:
Approved for public release;
distribution unlimited.

DDC
APR 28 1976
C97

AD No. _____

DDC FILE COPY 390 230

1473

**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania**

IN SEARCH OF THE NATIONAL PURPOSE

by

**Archer K. Blood
Deputy Commandant for International Affairs**

25 March 1977

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT:
Approved for public release;
distribution unlimited.

ACCESSION FOR	
NTIS	White Section <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DDC	Buff Section <input type="checkbox"/>
UNANNOUNCED	<input type="checkbox"/>
JUSTIFICATION	
BY	
DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY CODES	
Dist. A FILE, BULKY, SPECIAL	
A	

DISCLAIMER

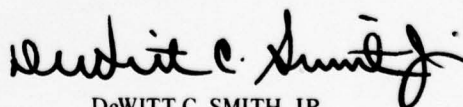
The views of the author do not purport to reflect the position of the Department of State, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Army.

FOREWORD

In this research memorandum, the author separates and analyzes the principal external and domestic ingredients of the US national purpose. National security is viewed as a means of giving us the opportunity to pursue our goals, rather than an end in itself. The author concludes that the concept of a national purpose is a valid one, relevant as a kind of litmus paper against which contemporary controversial issues can be tested, and necessarily involving the reconciliation of pragmatic and idealistic tensions.

The Military Issues Research Memoranda program of the US Army War College provides a means for timely dissemination of analytical papers which are not necessarily constrained by format or conformity with institutional policy. These memoranda are prepared on subjects of current importance in areas related to the author's professional work or interests.

This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Army.



DeWITT C. SMITH, JR.
Major General, USA
Commandant

IN SEARCH OF THE NATIONAL PURPOSE

It has always been difficult to encapsulate the distinguishing characteristics of the American national purpose. Once, right after the end of World War II, when James Byrnes was Secretary of State, he was trying to explain to the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Molotov, just exactly what it was which set the United States apart from the Soviet Union. Finally, Mr. Byrnes said, "Let me put it this way. I can walk into the White House anytime I want and nobody will stop me. I can go up to the President and say, 'Harry Truman, you're a damn fool.' And I won't be taken out and shot."

Molotov remained unimpressed by this explanation. "It's the same in the Soviet Union," he said. "I can go into the Kremlin and nobody will stop me. I can go straight up to Stalin and say, 'Harry Truman is a damn fool,' and I won't be shot."

National purpose is a tough concept on which to get a handle. There is even a legitimate question as to whether the national purpose is a valid concept or whether it was invented for the Army War College curriculum.

Some writers have been skeptical of the concept of national purpose. Hans Morgenthau, in his book *The Purpose of American Politics*, claims that American purpose does not consist of a substantive ideal, but of

procedures, ways of thinking, and conceptions of individual-society relations.¹

Daniel Boorstin maintains that the genius of America stems from the unprecedented opportunities of this continent and from a peculiar and unrepeatable combination of historical circumstances; that we have nothing in the line of a theory that can be exported to other peoples of the world.²

Reinhold Niebuhr makes a case against a national purpose by arguing that men are dangerous when they make claims of virtue, wisdom or power, which are beyond their competence, not only because they have unlimited appetites and unlimited yearning for power but because they are creatures with dreams; and their extravagant dreams turn into nightmares if they seek to realize them.³

Others, like Goethe, have assumed that the bulk of human effort goes simply to keeping the biological caravan going. But man is obstinate enough, and close enough to God, to ask occasionally, "To what purpose?", asking both for himself as an individual and as a member of a larger grouping, the Nation.

We have a national symbol, the American eagle. Some people say we have a national flower, the concrete cloverleaf. But do we have a national purpose—one that can be identified and consensually agreed to?

Since coming to the Army War College, I have sat through quite a few seminar discussions devoted to this question. Frequently, the upshot has been agreement that the national purpose is best expressed either by the Declaration of Independence in its reference to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, *or* by the preamble to the Constitution, *or* by Dean Acheson's cynical one-liner, "The national purpose of the United States is to survive, and perchance, prosper."

I would reject all these formulations as simplistic and only part of the answer. Mr. Acheson's, in particular, begs the issue. If we have a national purpose, it must be something which sets us apart, to some extent, from other nations. All nations, like all human beings or all animals, seek to survive and prosper. Surely, there is something in our history, our heritage, our character, our situation which distinguishes our aspirations from those of other nations.

I think there is and, so saying, I find myself accepting the concept of a national purpose. I shall go one step further and accept the school definition of national purpose as "the enduring and changing aspirations of a nation."

But this definition itself reveals the nature of the problem. Which aspirations have endured? Which have changed? Which are new? Will these new ones endure? How long is enduring? How are these aspirations articulated? And by whom? In the jargon of the social scientist, to what extent are these aspirations inner-directed, internally conceived and nourished, and to what extent are they outer-directed, *that is, responsive to and influenced by the world environment?*

A NATION WITH A TORCH

Let me begin by defining aspirations, for the purpose at hand, as idealized values. While the United States does not have any single, all-encompassing ideology, I think it is safe to say that we do possess a group of core values which have demonstrated their ability to survive. These values do not represent a single body of coherent thought, but rather a delicately balanced assortment in which we have made adjustments according to historical pressures and which calls for continuing adaptation.

One of the most enduring of our tenets has been the conviction that the United States, in Roger Williams' words, has been the "City on the Hill," from which should shine forth a new and better example of how men can live together and govern themselves. From the first we have been very much aware that we had succeeded in creating unique and successful means of securing for ourselves individual liberty, representative government, and an economic order which reflected the liberalism and freedom on the political side.

The American system, the American dream, has generally been held by Americans to be far wider than the limits of our national boundaries. Listen, for example, to Walt Whitman: "O America, because you build for mankind I build for you." Or Tom Paine: "My country is the world; my countrymen are all mankind."

During the first 100 years of our national life we did not consider ourselves obliged to export our governmental forms or ideals. We were primarily concerned with protecting these forms and ideals from contamination from Europe, with extending US trade, and with keeping the seas open for American ships. We could do so successfully because of our sheltered position behind the British fleet and British continental diplomacy and because our neighbor to the north, Canada, was a useful hostage to our good relations with the British Empire.

In the latter part of the 19th century the United States was

belatedly entranced by the same "smell of Empire" which had seduced all the other advanced Western nations. We took possession of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Hawaii out of a mixed bag of motives—desire for trade opportunities, outrage at the cruelties, real and alleged, of Spanish colonial administration, preemption of others, defense of our continental territories.

Those who opposed our imperialist adventure claimed that we had violated our purpose of keeping our unique contribution pure and undefiled by becoming a colonial power. Its proponents claimed that we were fulfilling our manifest destiny and that we owed it to less enlightened peoples to export our achievements and aspirations, not just by example but by positive action.

That poet-laureate of latter-day British imperialism, Rudyard Kipling, welcomed us to imperialist and world power status with these words, written on the occasion of our occupation of the Philippines:

Take up the White Man's burden—
Have done with childish days—
The lightly proffered laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years,
Cold-edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!⁴

In World War I we went a step further in our desire to see our form of government flourish in the world. Wilson took the country further than it was ready to go, and than it was practicable to go, when he proclaimed that the "world must be made safe for democracy."

America's withdrawal from the world in the period between the two World Wars represented a temporary consensus that neither the shape of the world nor the democratic character of nations was an important concern of ours.

World War II saw the beginning of a subtle change in our national purpose of promoting democratic government by constant example at home and sporadic action abroad. The emphasis shifted to opposition to totalitarian government, first Nazi and Fascist and then, after the war, Communist. Underlying our determined opposition to these totalitarian ideologies was, of course, the assumption that free, democratic governments more or less like our own could only succeed if protection were extended against totalitarian takeover.

In the intervening years many of the nations we have helped to protect have transformed themselves into authoritarian forms of government, and we have generally acquiesced in these transformations, provided the transformation was not to communism, as in the case of Guatemala, or to a seemingly dangerous home-grown ideology, such as that of Mossadegh in Iran.

Two important exceptions deserve mention here, and these exceptions may turn out in the long run to be more important than the general rule. Our military occupation of both West Germany and Japan after World War II was in a very real sense a crusade for our democratic principles, and a highly successful crusade. Woodrow Wilson would have been pleased indeed to see how well the beams from the "City on the Hill" caught fire in Bonn and Munich and Tokyo and Okinawa. And he would have been pleased, and probably not surprised, to learn that the executive agent for this success story was the US Army.

There exists a physical symbol which epitomizes this one aspect of national purpose I have been trying to capture—our national aspiration to raise a light of hope throughout the world and to serve as a refuge, rallying-place and inspiration to those concerned with the liberty and dignity of man. That symbol is the Statue of Liberty, and it is as significant today as it was in the floodstream of European immigration to our shores in the last century.

Those who fled Hitler's tyranny and religious persecution in the 1930's, the throngs of Eastern Europeans displaced by World War II, Hungarians after 1956 and Cubans after 1960 and Vietnamese and Cambodians in 1975, the many intellectuals who have sought political asylum—all these were drawn to our country, and welcomed by this country, primarily for the reason so well stated by Bayless Manning:

For all its blemishes, the United States stands in the forefront of the world in its commitment to the proposition that the individual human being should be free—free to think what he wants, write what he wishes, assemble as he will, read as his curiosity leads him, paint as his eye uniquely sees, worship as to him seems right, and espouse whatsoever political position he finds congenial, so long only as he accords those same privileges to his fellow citizens.⁵

Some have looked upon this element of our national purpose with cynical eyes, maintaining that the prospect of material gain shines brighter in the American dream than the light of freedom. In his novel, *The Plumed Serpent*, the British author D. H. Lawrence wrote:

And all the people who went there, Europeans, Negroes, Japanese, Chinese, all the colours and the races, were they the spent people, in whom the God impulse had collapsed, so they crossed to the great continent of negation, where the human will declares itself 'free' to pull down the soul of the world? Was it so? And did this account for the great drift to the New World, the drift of spent souls passing over to the side of Godless democracy, energetic negation? The negation which is the life-breath of materialism. And would the great negative pull of the Americans at last break the heart of the world?⁶

Lawrence slanders us, in my view. He does not appear to comprehend the intimate connection between our political liberty and our material success, a connection which I believe is mutually reinforcing. Moreover, Lawrence underestimates the durable, although uneven, nature of that element of our national purpose symbolized by the Lady with the Torch. Such programs as the Peace Corps, the Alliance for Progress, our attempts to use foreign economic assistance to build democratic institutions in the countries receiving our aid, the current popular and congressional concern over the suppression of human rights in countries such as South Korea and Chile, the debate over the moral quality of our foreign policy—all offer vital and immediate witness to the fact that we do have an enduring concern that others should have at least a chance at the same rights which we conceived, improved, and defended for ourselves.

Former Secretary of State Kissinger, to my mind, caught the essence of the external aspect of our national purpose in two statements:

We strive for a world in which the rule of law governs and fundamental human rights are the birthright of all.⁷

We have the moral courage to hold high, together with our allies, the banners of freedom in a turbulent and changing world.⁸

"Now, wait just one minute," I can hear you saying. "You have spoken this long about the external element of national purpose without once mentioning national security. Isn't the defense of our freedoms basic to our national purpose? Doesn't the preamble of the Constitution say something about providing for the common defense?"

The answer to both questions is yes. But I submit that the desire to protect one's self is so basic and natural and universal an urge that it should not strictly be considered an element of our national purpose. All nations, whether weak and small or large and strong, seek to defend

themselves. They do it in different ways. Some rely on a strong neighbor and friend; some, like certain animals, defend themselves by exposing their throats and counting on an absence of lethality on the part of their neighbors; some, if they are powerful enough, carry the entire burden of their defense on their own shoulders.

Dr. Kissinger has said that national security is not a goal in itself; *national security is a means of defending our values and giving us the opportunity to pursue our purposes and goals.*⁹ The distinction I am trying to draw is not just a semantic one. It really involves a question of priorities. For example, is our ultimate external goal to check Soviet expansionism or is it to enable the opportunities for free choice and individual liberty to extend themselves in the world? Admittedly, you cannot achieve the one without giving heed to the other. But one is an enduring aspiration; the other is a necessary, and I hope transitory, task in the pursuit of the more fundamental purpose.

TO PRESERVE AND ENLARGE OUR INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES

Our purpose abroad is inseparable from our purpose at home. In the domestic arena, even more than in the foreign policy field, it is difficult to funnel statements of goals into a single vessel. For purposes of exposition, I would offer that our basic domestic national purpose is to preserve and enlarge our individual liberties. The key words in this proposition are *enlarge* and *individual*. But this concept, if it is to have any meaning, must be examined in terms of its three principal dimensions: political, economic, and social.

In political terms our purpose has been to perfect the democratic process. I imagine that many Americans sincerely believe that the entire panoply of our democratic rights was handed us full-blown by the founding fathers. Certainly what they gave us in the Constitution of 1789 was grand and wise and enduring. But it was enduring in large part because it was adaptable to change and because the democratic process has since been improved and extended.

After all, our representative democracy was not all that representative or democratic in 1789. Half the electorate was disenfranchised because of sex, a large part of the remainder because of conditions of servitude, and an even larger part because they weren't sufficiently well off to own property.

Historians often like to depict the principal changes which have occurred since 1789 in terms of movements or eras—the age of Jackson

and the struggle against the elitist aspects of the established political order, the struggle to abolish slavery, the Populist and Progressive movement at the turn of the century to impose limits on the concentration of corporate economic power which begat political power and influence, and the civil rights and other legislation of our own era which have so effectively broadened the electoral base.

I find it more useful to think *about the specific* Constitutional amendments, or legislation, or court decisions which have over the years contributed to the perfection of the democratic process. To cite some of the most significant:

The 15th amendment (1870) which said the right to vote should not be denied or abridged because of race, color or previous condition of servitude. (Of course, it was not until our own generation that this section of our basic law was given real meaning.)

The 17th amendment (1913) which changed the method of election of US Senators from state legislatures to direct popular vote;

The 19th amendment (1920) giving nationwide suffrage to women;

The 23d amendment (1961) extending presidential voting rights to the District of Columbia;

The 24th amendment (1964) barring the use of the poll tax or any other tax in federal elections;

The 26th amendment (1971) lowering the voting age to 18 years;

The one-man, one-vote Supreme Court decision which ensured the full representation of urban populations in state legislatures where representation had often tended to favor the rural constituencies;

The efforts of both parties to reform their primary election and party convention practices in order to make the results conform more to the will of the electorate;

The legislation to reform election campaign financing;

Congress' effort to improve its procedures, notably the new budget procedure.

In his poem called "The Black Cottage," Robert Frost addresses the subject of the Declaration of Independence:

That's a hard mystery of Jefferson's.
What did he mean? Of course the easy way
Is to decide it simply isn't true.
It may not be. I heard a fellow say so.
But never mind, the Welshman got it planted
Where it will trouble us a thousand years.
Each age will have to reconsider it. 10

Each generation is indeed called upon to reapply the Declaration of Independence or, if you will, to redefine the national purpose.

Of the attempts to improve the democratic process which I have just mentioned, half of the constitutional amendments and all of the other signposts have come into effect during my lifetime. Yet, there are many Americans who are unhappy with the Congress, or public apathy, or the role of pressure groups or some other aspect of the political process. The task of redefining and reasserting our individual political rights is a constant one and a controversial one, for only in hindsight do we come in large numbers to accept the logic and wisdom of actions which we debate so hotly and protractedly when the issue is still in doubt.

The economic corollary to the political dimension of our national purpose is the protection and extension of the individual's freedom of choice in economic decisions—whether they be decisions on production, pricing, advertising and sales policies made by individual businessmen or managers or farmers, or decisions on wages and labor policy generally made through collective bargaining by the managers and trade union leaders, or the millions of decisions made daily by consumers about how they will spend their money.

Because he believed economic democracy to be an essential bulwark of political democracy, Thomas Jefferson favored a nation of small farmers and merchants. The events of the past 200 years have carried us a long distance away from the Jeffersonian ideal. Since Jefferson's time industrialization and a mushrooming population have given rise to large and powerful economic organizations—private corporate giants, labor unions, professional and trade associations, and the most powerful economic organization of all, government.

Still, there has been throughout our history, and particularly in the last 100 years, a discernible purpose to diffuse and check economic power as much as possible and to preserve in as undiluted a form as possible those underpinnings of freedom of economic choice—private profit and competition.

Once more I sense grumblings of disbelief and disapproval. How can I talk of diffusion of power when the big corporations continually get bigger despite the antimonopoly legislation on the books, when the labor movement centralizes at the national level in one all-embracing organization, when agriculture, once called the last bulwark of individualism, has become industrial big business, when government regulatory measures circumscribe economic freedom of action at every turn, whether it be enforced and expensive adherence to environmental

protection measures or nondiscriminatory hiring practices or safety or hygienic standards?

Yet competition, or as the political scientists might say, countervailing power, persists among these concentrations of bigness. Big labor, for example, acts as a check to big business, and the regulatory activities of big government are in the main designed to protect the welfare of individuals and are *in response to public demands* for such protection.

Max Lerner has written that each civilization has a model which the ordinary man seeks to emulate. In Athens it was the leisure-class citizen with a turn for art and philosophy. In Rome it was the soldier-administrator; in the Middle Ages, the cleric dreaming of sainthood; in China, the mandarin-scholar; in India, the ascetic; in France, the courtier; in German and Japanese history, it was the elite soldier of the Junker and Samurai classes; and in America, the businessman.¹¹

That leads us to certain questions: *Is the economic dimension of national purpose the dominant one? Is our primary urge the pursuit of profit? After all, didn't Calvin Coolidge say it all in his remark, "the business of America is business"?*

My answer is not so, and less so today than before. The appeal of business as a way of life draws sustenance from the Puritan virtues of austerity and acquisitiveness, from the Faustian spirit of risk and excitement in the pursuit of power, and from the democratic urge to be one's own boss. As American capitalism has transformed itself since the days of the robber barons into the characteristic model of large corporations run by hired professional management, the relevance of these sources of sustenance for the business spirit has been considerably diminished.

The professional corporate manager, in the business of making money steadily year on end for his firm, cannot concentrate exclusively on making money here and now. In the words of a former Chairman of Standard Oil of New Jersey, "He must conduct the affairs of the enterprise in such a way as to maintain an equitable and working balance among the claims of the various directly interested groups—stockholders, employees, customers and the public at large."¹²

Moreover, the vast majority of professional and technical employees of corporations work in a bureaucratized environment not too dissimilar from government. Thanks to the egalitarian function of the income tax, these bureaucrats in private business have only marginally

greater opportunities of amassing wealth than their colleagues in government.

The proportion of the work force employed in government has increased, and nobody should enter government service with the idea of making money, unless he operates on a very restricted definition of wealth or is insensitive to the existence of the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth.

As an ever-increasing proportion of the work force in private business is drawn into such service fields as transportation, recreational services, and food retailing, the acquisitive spirit, while never stilled, will find itself competing with the inherent community service aspects of these areas of business endeavor.

Because we as a nation have more than ever before, we seem to want less. It seems particularly true of the younger generation that more important than the opportunity to make a lot of money is the opportunity to do what they want to do for a living.

This brings us to the third dimension of our domestic national purpose—the social aspect. I would define this purpose as to enhance the dignity of the individual by expanding his opportunities for self-development and expression. It is this dimension of national purpose which should serve as the primary beacon in the areas of education, health and welfare, housing and urban affairs, and the administration of justice.

It is also this dimension of national purpose which is at the center of our concerns today—even more than the political and considerably more than the economic.

Because of the increasing pressures of person against person in this shrunken and crowded globe, there has been a growing number of compulsions upon the individual, designed to require him to do things for the general welfare, as well as his own benefit. We are continually fighting over this difficult boundary line between liberty and responsibility, as in the controversy of the court decisions concerning the rights of accused.

We are also fighting a constant struggle at the boundary between the freedom of the individual and paternal action on the part of the state designed to reconcile individual freedom with the common good. Two controversial issues of today illustrate the character of this struggle. One is the question of forced busing to bring about racial balance and equality of educational opportunity in our public schools. The other is the government's power, through taxation and welfare payments, to redistribute wealth.

In discussing the external dimension of national purpose I raised the relevance of national security, arguing that national security was a means, not an end. In a discussion of the domestic purpose a parallel can be drawn with respect to the pressures for financial security and the entire panoply of social security, federal old-age and survivors' insurance, state unemployment insurance, welfare payments and the pressures for compulsory health insurance and for a *guaranteed annual wage*. After all, the Defense Department's greatest competitor for the tax dollar is that other purveyor of security, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Here again, I would argue that all this evidence of a drive for security represents a search for ways in which to satisfy the basic purpose—enhancement of the dignity of the individual. True, dignity does not derive exclusively from one's economic situation. But how difficult it is to maintain one's dignity if you are left impoverished in your old age or crushed by crippling medical bills or condemned to live in squalor. In the final analysis dignity rests on the faith that individuals are beings of infinite value—which is another way of reaffirming the social dimension of national purpose.

The relative weight which we assign to liberty or to security has also been at the crux of many of the issues in civil liberties. Witness the controversy over wiretapping and the role of the FBI and CIA in domestic surveillance. The proper balance in such matters is one on which honest men may honestly differ, but in general I subscribe to the guidance of Ben Franklin, "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty or safety."

THE RELEVANCE OF NATIONAL PURPOSE

The national purpose, if it is to have any real meaning, must be something more than a patriotic or nostalgic adherence to a set of symbols. National purpose, as I see it and as I have tried to define it, is a sort of litmus paper against which the key controversial issues of the day are tested. Except to the fanatics on either side of the political spectrum, the rights and wrongs of these issues, or even their degree of congruence with the national purpose are seldom, if ever, clear-cut. How congruent, for example, is the Equal Rights Amendment or right-to-work legislation with your concept of national purpose?

There are those among us who shy away from taking an interest in contemporary issues, looking upon them as unclean because they are

controversial. These people tend to cloak themselves in sentimental hokum by professing allegiance to such unchallengeable institutions as Mom, apple pie, and the great American game of baseball. Such an attitude is a cop-out. In my eyes the real patriots are those who read themselves into the issues, have opinions, and express their opinions, either by voting or by any one of the myriad influence-determining ways open to members of a democratic society. The substance of their opinions is not as important as their concern and their willingness to get involved.

If you accept my premise that the concept of national purpose is relevant to current issues, and indeed caught up with them, then it should follow that the direction of national purpose is influenced by the debates over these issues and, more importantly, by the eventual outcome of these debates which represent a consensus of sorts, usually expressed in new legislation. This is true, a good early example being the consensus arrived at after much debate in our body of basic law, the Constitution. More often and more importantly, however, the direction of national purpose is foreshadowed by a call to action from an agency of authority; in our case, nearly always the President.

Although Woodrow Wilson was tragically proven wrong in his own case, he was essentially correct when he wrote that the President "is the only national voice in affairs. Let him once win the admiration and confidence of the country and no other single force can withstand him, no combination of forces will easily overpower him. His position takes the imagination of the country. . . . His is the vital place of action in the system."¹³

Think back, for example, to such clarion calls as Lincoln's second inaugural, or Franklin D. Roosevelt's first inaugural, or Kennedy's inaugural, or Wilson's 14 points, or Roosevelt's Four Freedoms.

To redefine and direct the aspirations of an entire people is no easy task, especially if the people is encouraged to speak in a plurality of voices and to treat the statements of its leaders with skepticism. But a president, particularly a newly-elected president, is in a good position to restate the national purpose or give it new dimension and meaning.

For this reason I find myself a bit impatient with those who claim we have lost our sense of national purpose and are adrift. One thing that a study of history teaches us is that each generation, at some time or other, is aware of a lack of consensus about its goals and purposes and engages in some hard soul-searching. Unless we study history carefully, we tend to forget that the choices and issues facing our

fathers and grandfathers were not then as black or white as they now appear to us. They were just as murky and difficult as the choices open to us.

Perhaps Americans are an overly introspective race. Excessive contemplation of our navels can breed cynicism or defeatism or nearsightedness. But introspection in the form of searching questions as to *where we have come* and where we should be going is healthy— and essential, if we are to be true to a national purpose.

Our idealized values will always be more or less at war with the pragmatic considerations of choosing between a rock and a hard place. If we define an idealist, in rough paraphrase of a saying of Franklin D. Roosevelt's as "a man with both feet planted firmly in the air" and a pragmatist in direct quotation from Disraeli as "one who practices the errors of his forefathers," I daresay that the vast majority of this audience would enlist under the banner of pragmatism.

We should be aware, however, that the pursuit and application of the national purpose means the reconciliation of these two divergent tensions, not the victory of one over the other. Secretary Kissinger made the case for a balance when he said:

We must, of course, avoid becoming obsessed with stability. An excessively pragmatic policy will be empty of vision and humanity. It will lack not only direction, but also roots and heart. . . . America cannot be true to itself without moral purpose. This country has always had a sense of mission. Americans have always held the view that America stood for something above and beyond its material achievements. A purely pragmatic policy provides no criteria for other nations to assess our performance and no standards to which the American people can rally.¹⁴

Let me sum up on an upbeat note. I believe we have a national purpose which is just as relevant as ever and just as important and difficult as ever to apply as a guide to specific issues. I believe our quadrennial elections and our institution of a strong presidency provide us the opportunity periodically to look closely at ourselves and then chart a course for the next several years. I believe that Carl Sandburg captured the truth in these words:

Always the path of American history has been into the unknown. Always there arose enough of reserves of strength, balances of sanity, portions of wisdom, to carry the nation through to a fresh start with ever-increasing vitality.¹⁵

ENDNOTES

1. Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Purpose of American Politics*, p. 21.
2. Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Genius of American Politics*, p. 1.
3. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Structure of Nations and Empires*, p. 293.
4. Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man's Burden*.
5. Bayless Manning, "Goals, Ideology and Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1976, p. 278.
6. D. H. Lawrence, *The Plumed Serpent*, pp. 73-74.
7. Henry Kissinger, "A Just Consensus, A Stable Order, A Durable Peace," Address before the 28th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, September 24, 1973, reprinted in *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. LXIX, No. 1790, p. 469.
8. Kissinger, "America's Permanent Interests," Address before the Boston World Affairs Council, March 11, 1976, reprinted in *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. LXXIV, No. 1919, p. 431.
9. Kissinger, "The Moral Foundations of Foreign Policy," Address before Upper Midwest Council, July 15, 1975, reprinted in *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. LXXIII, No. 1884, p. 164.
10. Robert Frost, *Complete Poems*, pp. 75-76.
11. Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization*, p. 274.
12. Frank Abrams, quoted in "U.S.A. The Permanent Revolution," by the Editors of *Fortune* in collaboration with Russell W. Davenport, p. 80.
13. Quoted by James Reston, "Our History Suggests a Remedy," in *The National Purpose*, p. 113.
14. Kissinger, "Moral Purpose and Policy Choices," Address before the Third Pacem in Terris Conference, October 8, 1973, reprinted in *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. LXIX, No. 1792, p. 527.
15. Commenting, November 19, 1959, on the 96th anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benson, Leonard. *National Purpose: Ideology and Ambivalence in America*. Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 1963.
- Boorstin, Daniel. *The Genius of American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.
- Gabriel, Ralph. *The Course of American Democratic Thought*. New York: The Roland Press Company, 1956.
- Goals for Americans*. New York: The American Assembly, Columbia University, 1960.
- Jessup, John, et al. *The National Purpose*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960.
- Morgenthau, Hans. *The Purpose of American Politics*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951.
- Niebuhr, Reinhold. *The Structure of Nations and Empires*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959.
- Smith, Huston, ed. *The Search for America*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1959.

OTHER RECENTLY PUBLISHED MEMORANDA

Detente, National Security, and Multinational Corporations	AD A013014
Nonconsonant Detente and NATO	AD A013522
<i>Deterrence and Detente</i>	AD A013979
The Impact of Crises on the Evolution of Strategy and Forces in an Era of Detente	AD A014158
The Terror Trap	AD A014159
Collective Defense, Neutralization, and the Balance of Power: Contending Security Policies in Southeast Asia	AD A015464
Precision Guided Munitions: Implications for Detente	AD A015465
Chile, 1964-74: The Successes and Failures of Reformism	AD A015466
International Leadership in an Era of Detente	AD A015467
Detente and the Eastern Mediterranean	AD A016859
Terrorism and the Military Response	AD A016860
The Prospects of Soviet American Alliance	AD A016884
A Fifth Round in the Middle East? Western European Perceptions	AD A017049
Nuclear Strategy for Defending a Border	AD A017050
Being Number One Nation: Primacy and Detente	AD A017794
Interests and Strategies in an Era of Detente: An Overview	AD A019091
The Relevance of Civilian Based Defense to US Security Interests	AD A020178

Copies of any of these memoranda may be obtained from the Defense Documentation Center. The request, indicating title and AD number, should be sent to the following address:

Defense Documentation Center
Cameron Station
Alexandria, VA 22314

DISTRIBUTION

ODCSOPS, DA	6
National War College	3
Naval War College	2
Air War College	4
Air University	3
Command and General Staff College	2
Armed Forces Staff College	1
Industrial College of the Armed Forces	2
Inter-American Defense College	1
University of National Defense	1
Defense Intelligence School	1
US Military Academy	2
Marine Corps Development and Education Command	3
National Defence College	1
Royal College of Defense Studies	1
L'Ecole Superieure de Guerre	1
Fuehrungsakademie der Bundeswehr	1
NATO Defence College	1
Concepts Analysis Agency	2
Intelligence Threat Analysis Detachment	1
Training and Doctrine Command	1
Combined Arms Combat Development Activity	1
Studies, Analysis, and Gaming Agency	1
Office of the Chief of Engineers	1
Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency	1
Defense Intelligence Agency	2
Central Intelligence Agency	3
Department of State	2
Defense Logistics Studies Information Exchange	1
Institute for Military Assistance	1
US Army Federal Executive Fellow, Brookings Institution	1
US Navy	2
US Marine Corps	2
US Air Force	3
432d Military Intelligence Detachment	1
434th Military Intelligence Detachment	1
467th Military Intelligence Detachment	1
I ROTC Region Headquarters	1
II ROTC Region Headquarters	1
III ROTC Region Headquarters	1
IV ROTC Region Headquarters	1
National Guard Bureau	1
Defense Documentation Center	12
Army Library	1
Military History Research Collection	1
Army War College	57

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER ACN 77012	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) IN SEARCH OF THE NATIONAL PURPOSE		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Military Issues Research Memorandum
7. AUTHOR(s) Archer K. Blood		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Strategic Studies Institute US Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)
10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS		10. REPORT DATE 25 March 1977
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 18
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) UNCLASSIFIED
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) National Purpose - ideology - national security - democratic process - freedom of choice - dignity of the individual		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) The principal external aspect of the US national purpose, symbolized by the Statue of Liberty, is our enduring aspiration to serve as a refuge, rallying place and inspiration to those concerned with freedom and individual dignity. Our basic domestic national purpose is to preserve and enlarge our individual liberties: in political terms to perfect the democratic process; in economic terms to protect the individual's freedom of choice in economic decisions; and in social terms to enhance the dignity of the individual by expanding his opportunities for self-development and expression.		

UNCLASSIFIED

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)